

down for a little, but again suddenly jumping up went to the corner in the first room and instituted a fresh search. How long it was before she was satisfied that she had not been deprived of a kitten I cannot say, for I had to go out, and by the time I returned she had settled down.

INCIDENT No. 2.—The same cat turning up while I was at breakfast to-day, I sent a servant to see if the kittens in the writing room were all right. They were reported not to be there, but I was told that yesterday she had been seen transporting the kittens to a coach house near the stables, some 150 yards away from the house. I sent to have them fetched and shown to the mother, then I had them taken to an almirah in my bed room which formerly she had much affected. She followed the servant who carried them up, saw where they were deposited and returned to me to the dining room to finish her breakfast. She then immediately went back to the almirah and removed the kittens one after the other back to the coach house!

I trouble you with these incidents only because facts, however trivial, may, at some time or other be of use to those interested in such matters. You will observe that I am careful not to condemn all cats as wanting in reasoning power, as the data on which I draw my conclusions are furnished only by the conduct, under observation, of a single cat.

KENNETH MACKENZIE,

Colonel.

Amraoti Camp, Berar, 6th October, 1891.

V.—THE BREEDING OF SNAKES.

As little has been recorded about the breeding of snakes the following may be worth noting:—

On July 30th this year a large green tree-snake, *Dryophis mycterizans*, was brought to the Public Gardens here. On the 27th September she gave birth to 12 young ones, thus proving that this particular species is viviparous. The size of young snakes is usually about one-sixth of that of the adult, but the young in this case were about seventeen inches in length, the mother being about four feet six inches long. It is possible that the rule only holds good for those snakes that are hatched outside the body of the parent.

HAROLD S. FERGUSON.

Trevaudrum, 30th September, 1891.

We have had several gravid females of the above mentioned snake in the Society's Rooms, and although the young ones were, in the majority of cases, produced alive, in one instance they did not hatch out until the day after the eggs were laid. *Dryophis mycterizans* may therefore be described as being *ovo-viviparous*, and I strongly suspect that all true tree-snakes are the same. Until steps are taken to keep Indian snakes, under observation, in

properly constructed serpentaria, in this country, our knowledge regarding their habits will remain as limited as it now is.

H. M. PHIPSON,

Hon. Secy., Bo. Nat. Hist. Society.

Bombay, 6th October, 1891.

VI.—HOW THE MONITOR OR GHORAPAD (*VARANUS
BENGALENSIS*) DEFENDS ITSELF.

To-day, whilst reading in the verandah, I heard an unusual sort of noise, as of some creature careering over the gravel, and immediately got up to see what it was. A terrier, who had been asleep on the verandah steps, had also been disturbed by the noise, and when I looked up I found him standing face to face with a Ghorapad, or Monitor Lizard, about 3 feet long. They both appeared to be much astonished at the other's appearance. The Ghorapad evidently came to the conclusion that if there was to be a row in such an open space it ought to be fought out at once, and prepared himself accordingly, arching his back, swelling out the pouch under his throat, darting out his tongue in snake-like fashion, and hissing furiously. The dog for some time did not know what to make of such a strange creature, but eventually came to the conclusion that it ought to be worried and killed. He commenced the attack by rushing at his opponent's head, but the big lizard was equal to the occasion, and by suddenly turning round, presented his tail to the enemy, lashing out furiously with it and sending the gravel flying in all directions. Two or three times the dog returned to the attack, but always to find a tail where the head ought to be. Meanwhile a patiwalla, hearing the noise, came on the scene, but quickly disappeared muttering something to himself of which only the words distinctly heard were "Karna ki waste." He shortly reappeared with a broad grin on his face and a thick blanket in his hand which he carefully threw over the Ghorapad, but the active creature slipped from under the *cumbli* and scuttled off for dear life towards the flower beds into which he escaped, thus saving his skin from adorning the family tom-tom, and depriving Gopal of a most tasty dish.

GEORGE K. WASEY.

Marmagoa, 8th October, 1891.

VII.—BOMBAY FERNERIES.

With reference to the paper on "Bombay Ferneries," it has long appeared to me that the delightful recreation of gardening is much neglected in our large sea-side stations, and Mr. Carstensen will be doing Bombay a service if he succeeds in setting on foot a more active love of fern-growing—I say *active* advisedly; for growing ferns, or, indeed, any plants, in a vicarious way by